

Message Text

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FOR CARTER FROM PA

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TAGS: SOPN, OVIP (VANCE)

SUBJECT:PRESS MATERIAL

1. HEREWITH FULL TEXT WASHINGTON POST ARTICLE, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 14, HEADED "PRESIDENT DISPUTES CASTRO'S ACCOUNT."
2. THE WHITE HOUSE TOOK SHARP ISSUE YESTERDAY WITH CUBAN PRESIDENT FIDEL CASTRO'S LATEST ACCOUNT OF HIS DEALINGS WITH CARTER ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS ON CUBA'S ROLE IN THE REBEL INVASION OF ZAIRE LAST MONTH.
3. WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY JODY POWELL TOLD REPORTERS THAT QUOTE WE ARE WILLING TO PLACE THE RECORDS OF VERACITY OF PRESIDENT CARTER AND CASTRO SIDE BY SIDE AND LET THE AMERICAN PEOPLE DECIDE FOR THEMSELVES UNQUOTE.

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4. POWELL MADE HIS STATEMENT AND SENIOR WHITE HOUSE OFFICIALS GAVE ADDITIONAL DETAILS OF U.S. DIPLOMATIC CONTACTS WITH CASTRO IN THE WAKE OF INTERVIEWS GRANTED BY THE CUBAN LEADER ON MONDAY TO TWO U.S. CONGRESSMEN AND THREE AMERICAN REPORTERS.
5. THE LAWMAKERS, REPS, STEPHEN J. SOLARZ (D.-N.Y.) AND

ANTHONY C. BEILENSON (D.-CALIF.), SAID IN A NEWS CONFERENCE

SHORTLY AFTER RETURNING FROM HAVANA THAT NINE HOURS OF CONVERSATIONS WITH CASTRO HAD RAISED DOUBTS IN THEIR MINDS ABOUT THE U.S. VERSION OF CUBAN INVOLVEMENT IN THE ATTACK ON SHABA PROVINCE.

6. BOTH MEN ARE MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE, WHERE THEY HEARD CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY DIRECTOR STANSFIELD TURNER PRESENT A SECRET VERSION OF THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION'S CASE LAST WEEK. THEY CALLED THE U.S. EVIDENCE QUOTE NOT CONCLUSIVE, CIRCUMSTANTIAL AND HEARSAY UNQUOTE, BUT DECLINED TO SAY WHETHER THEY BELIEVED CASTRO RATHER THAN CARTER AND HIS AIDES.

7. SOLARZ SAID CASTRO MADE QUOTE A VERY COMPELLING CASE UNQUOTE THAT THERE WAS NO CUBAN INVOLVEMENT WITH LUNDA TRIBESMEN, ALSO KNOWN AS KATANGANS, WHO ATTACKED SEVERAL TOWNS IN SHABA PROVINCE EARLY LAST MONTH. HE SAID THAT EVEN IF CARTER PROVES TO BE MISTAKEN, THIS MAY BE DUE TO A QUOTE FAULTY INTERPRETATION OF CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE UNQUOTE RATHER THAN CONSCIOUS MISREPRESENTATIONS.

8. THE LAWMAKERS SAID THEY ARE MAKING A REPORT TO THEIR COMMITTEE AND ARE ASKING TO SEE CARTER.

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9. CASTRO'S INTERVIEWS WITH THE CONGRESSMEN, U.S. REPORTERS AND INFORMATION PROVIDED BY WHITE HOUSE AND STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS YESTERDAY SUGGESTS THIS SEQUENCE OF EVENTS:

10. MAY 11-12 - KATANGESE FORCES BASED IN ANGOLA STAGED ATTACKS ON KOLWEZI AND THE SURROUNDING AREA OF ZAIRE'S MINERAL-RICH SHABA PROVINCE, THEIR HOMELAND.

11. MAY 16 - THE STATE DEPARTMENT, RESPONDING TO QUESTIONS, SAID THROUGH SPOKESMAN HODDING CARTER: QUOTE WE HAVE NO INDEPENDENT CONFIRMATION THAT CUBANS ARE INVOLVED IN THE PRESENT ACTION, BUT I HAVE STRESSED THAT OUR INFORMATION IS SKETCHY. WE HAVE NO HARD INFORMATION ON RECENT TRAINING OF KATANGANS BY CUBANS UNQUOTE.

12. MAY 17 - CASTRO SUMMONED LYLE F. LANE, SENIOR U.S. DIPLOMAT IN HAVANA, AND DENIED ANY DIRECT OR INDIRECT CUBAN INVOLVEMENT IN THE SHABA ATTACK. CASTRO TOLD LANE HE HAD HEARD RUMORS OF AN ATTACK MORE THAN A MONTH BEFORE AND TRIED UNSUCCESSFULLY TO STOP IT THROUGH THE ANGOLAN GOVERNMENT.

13. MAY 19 - LANE DELIVERED AN ORAL RESPONSE FROM SECRETARY OF STATE CYRUS VANCE TO CUBAN VICE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS RENE ANILLO FOR TRANSMISSION TO CASTRO. ACCORDING TO CASTRO'S VERSION, VANCE SAID THAT HE AND CARTER HAD TAKEN NOTE OF THE CUBAN'S ASSURANCES THAT CUBA WAS NOT INVOLVED, AND ASKED THAT CUBA MAKE A PUBLIC STATEMENT OF NONINVOLVEMENT.

14. CASTRO TOLD THE LAWMAKERS THAT HIS MESSAGE FROM THE U.S. GOVERNMENT WAS THAT THE ASSURANCES WERE QUOTE APPRECIATED UNQUOTE. REP. SOLARZ SAID THAT CASTRO SUGGESTED THAT THE MESSAGE HE RECEIVED WAS AN IMPLICIT ADMISSION THAT CUBANS WERE NOT INVOLVED IN THE SHABA ATTACK.
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15. ACCORDING TO A SENIOR WHITE HOUSE OFFICIAL YESTERDAY, QUOTE AT NO POINT DID LANE STATE OR IMPLY THAT WE ACCEPTED THESE ASSURANCES OR CLAIMS AT FACE VALUE UNQUOTE. THE WHITE HOUSE OFFICIAL SAID LANE HAD TOLD THE CUBANS THAT THE UNITED STATES TRUSTED THE ASSURANCES WERE TRUE BECAUSE IF THEY WERE NOT IT WOULD BE A MATTER QUOTE OF THE GRAVEST CONCERN UNQUOTE TO THE U.S. GOVERNMENT. THE WHITE HOUSE OFFICIAL SAID CUBAN OFFICIALS WERE ASKED TO QUOTE EXPRESS THEIR CONCERN PUBLICLY UNQUOTE ABOUT THE ATTACK.

16. AT THE WHITE HOUSE ON THE MORNING OF MAY 19, A MEETING WAS CONVENED UNDER THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF DAVID AARON, DEPUTY PRESIDENTIAL ASSISTANT FOR NATIONAL SECURITY, INCLUDING REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE AND DEFENSE DEPARTMENTS AND THE CIA, PRIMARILY TO DISCUSS THE U.S. AIRLIFT TO SHABA AND WHAT SHOULD BE SAID ABOUT IT.

17. THE CIA REPRESENTATIVE AT THE MEETING, ACCORDING TO PARTICIPANTS, SAID HIS AGENCY HAS EVIDENCE THAT CUBANS HAVE BEEN QUOTE RECENTLY UNQUOTE TRAINING THE KATANGANS WHO ATTACKED SHABA. THE SAME DAY THE WHITE HOUSE INSTRUCTED THE STATE DEPARTMENT TO MAKE A STATEMENT TO THIS EFFECT THROUGH THE PRESS SPOKESMAN.

18. SPOKESMAN TOM RESTON, AT THE STATE DEPARTMENT NOON BRIEFING, VOLUNTEERED THAT QUOTE NEW INFORMATION IS THAT IT IS NOW OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT THE INSURGENTS IN SHABA PROVINCE HAVE BEEN TRAINED RECENTLY BY CUBANS IN ANGOLA AND THAT THEY ARE EMPLOYING SOVIET WEAPONS UNQUOTE. THIS WAS THE FIRST HARD U.S. CHARGE THAT CUBA WAS DIRECTLY INVOLVED.

19. LATER THE SAME DAY A TOP STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL, AT
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A BRIEFING FOR REPORTERS, DISCLAIMED ANY KNOWLEDGE OF
QUOTE RECENT UNQUOTE TRAINING BY CUBANS.

20. ACCORDING TO THE WHITE HOUSE, IT IS QUOTE VERY POSSIBLE
UNQUOTE THAT THE INTELLIGENCE ON WHICH THE MAY 19 PUBLIC
STATEMENTS WERE MADE WAS NOT AVAILABLE TO VANCE WHEN THE
MESSAGE TO CASTRO WAS DRAFTED.

21. MAY 20 - CUBA'S FOREIGN MINISTRY ISSUED A PUBLIC
STATEMENT SAYING: QUOTE THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT CATEGORICALLY
REITERATES THAT THERE DO NOT EXIST NOW, NOR HAVE THERE EVER
EXISTED, TIES OF MILITARY COOPERATION BETWEEN CUBA AND
THESE FORCES; THAT CUBA HAS NOT FURNISHED ANY MILITARY
EQUIPMENT TO THEM; THAT CUBA HAS NOT TRAINED THEM OR HAD
ANY PART IN THEIR ACTIONS AND THAT THERE ARE NO CUBAN
TROOPS OR TECHNICIANS IN ZAIRE UNQUOTE.

22. MAY 25 - CARTER, IN A PRESS CONFERENCE STATEMENT WHICH
HAD BEEN DRAFTED BY A COMMITTEE OF WHITE HOUSE AND STATE
DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS MEETING THE NIGHT BEFORE AND EARLIER
THAT DAY, TOLD A PRESS CONFERENCE IN CHICAGO THAT CUBA
SHARES QUOTE A BURDEN AND A RESPONSIBILITY UNQUOTE FOR
THE ATTACK. CHRISTOPHER

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